

Department of Justice COMM CENTER

George Deukmejian

(PRONOUNCED DUKE MAY-GHE)

DEC 6 10 54 AM '82

Attorney General

December 3, 1982

Richard E. Reavis, Chief
California Branch
Region IX
United States Environmental Protection Agency
215 Fremont Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: California Application for Primacy,
Class II UIC Program

Dear Mr. Reavis:

The Headquarters Underground Injection Control (UIC) Primacy Review Team reviewed the responses made by the California Division of Oil and Gas (CDOG) to comments made by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on CDOG's primacy application. Except for items 2 and 4, the CDOG's responses were found to be adequate. With respect to items 2 and 4, the Review Team indicated that the responses would be adequate if it could obtain from the California Attorney General's office, the legal representative of the CDOG, assurances on two matters. The first matter on which assurance is sought is that the CDOG can enforce the conditions set out in the letter of approval, which is the first step in the CDOG's two-step permitting process for underground injection. The second matter on which assurance is sought is that compliance by the operator with the letter of approval does not relieve the operator from compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations. We are able to give you the assurances you seek.

Under section 1724.6 of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code, prior approval of any underground injection or disposal project must be obtained from the CDOG before the project can begin. This prior approval is in the form of a letter setting forth the conditions upon which the approval to proceed is given. Failure of an operator to comply with any conditions set forth in the letter of approval would constitute proceeding with the project without the approval of the CDOG. This would be a violation by the operator of section 1724.6 of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code which would enable the CDOG to invoke the enforcement procedures available to it to

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compel compliance with the terms of the letter of approval.

The letter of approval may set forth special operational requirements that relate specifically to the project being approved. These requirements are in addition to, not in lieu of, the requirements of statutes and regulations applicable to underground injection and disposal projects. All operators must comply with applicable provisions of the statutes and regulations, and the CDOG has no authority to exempt an operator from such compliance. The statutes and regulations (see for example section 1724.10 of Title 14 of the California Administrative Code) provide general requirements for underground injection projects. However, unique characteristics of each project site may necessitate, in addition, site-specific requirements which is the function of the letter of approval to provide.

If this office can be of any further assistance in the process of obtaining EPA approval of the CDOG's primacy application, please do not hesitate to call.

Very truly yours,



Alan V. Hager
Deputy Attorney General

AVH:mjp
cc: M. G. Mefferd